

CYCLING WEEK ACROSS SALENTO

South east of Italy



food and wine.



SALENTO
BICI TOUR

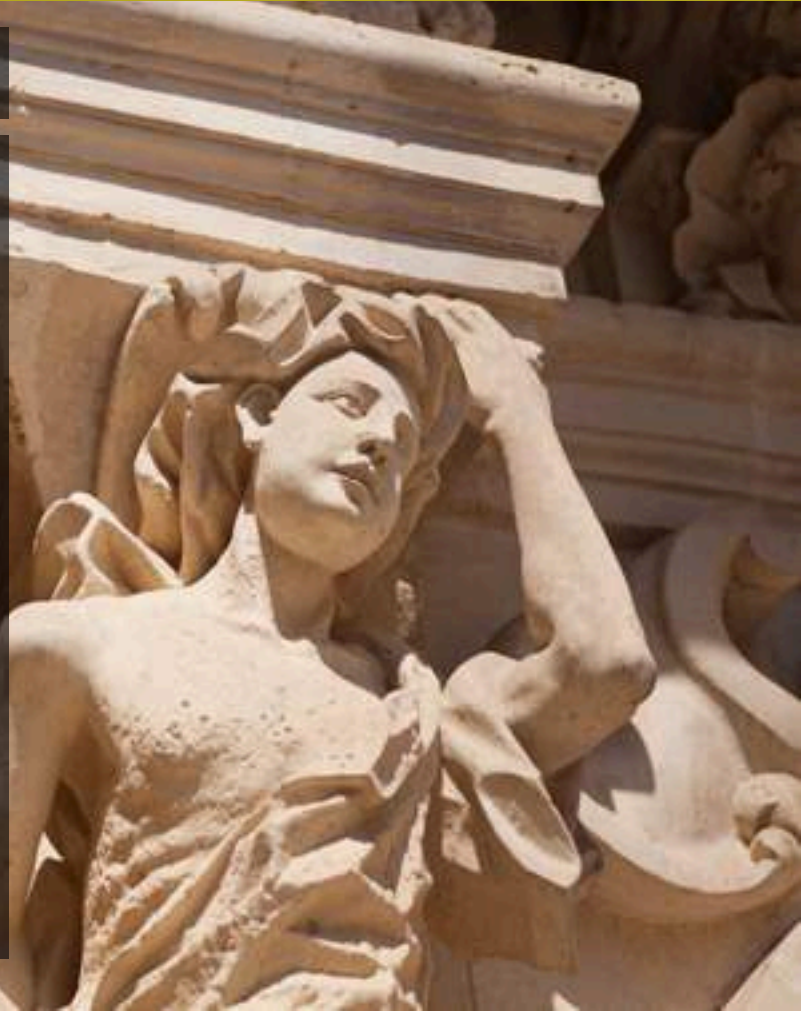
SELF
GUIDED
TOUR



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Salento

Salento is in the south-eastern most region of Italy lying in the so-called "heel of the boot". Situated in the centre of the **Mediterranean Sea**, this region is filled with memories of the different civilizations that inhabited it, from the Messapii, to the Greeks, followed by the Romans and then the Normans. Crossing Salento with a bicycle is like cycling through an **open-air museum**. Prehistoric Dolmen, Byzantine shrines hidden in the caves, Baroque cathedrals, secluded corners of the coast... are all but a few of the things you can see when visiting this area. Salento is famous worldwide for its traditional cuisine, which combines marine and earth flavors, and for its **wine production**, particularly of **Primitivo and Negroamaro grapes**. Its unique combinations will delight all food and wine lovers.



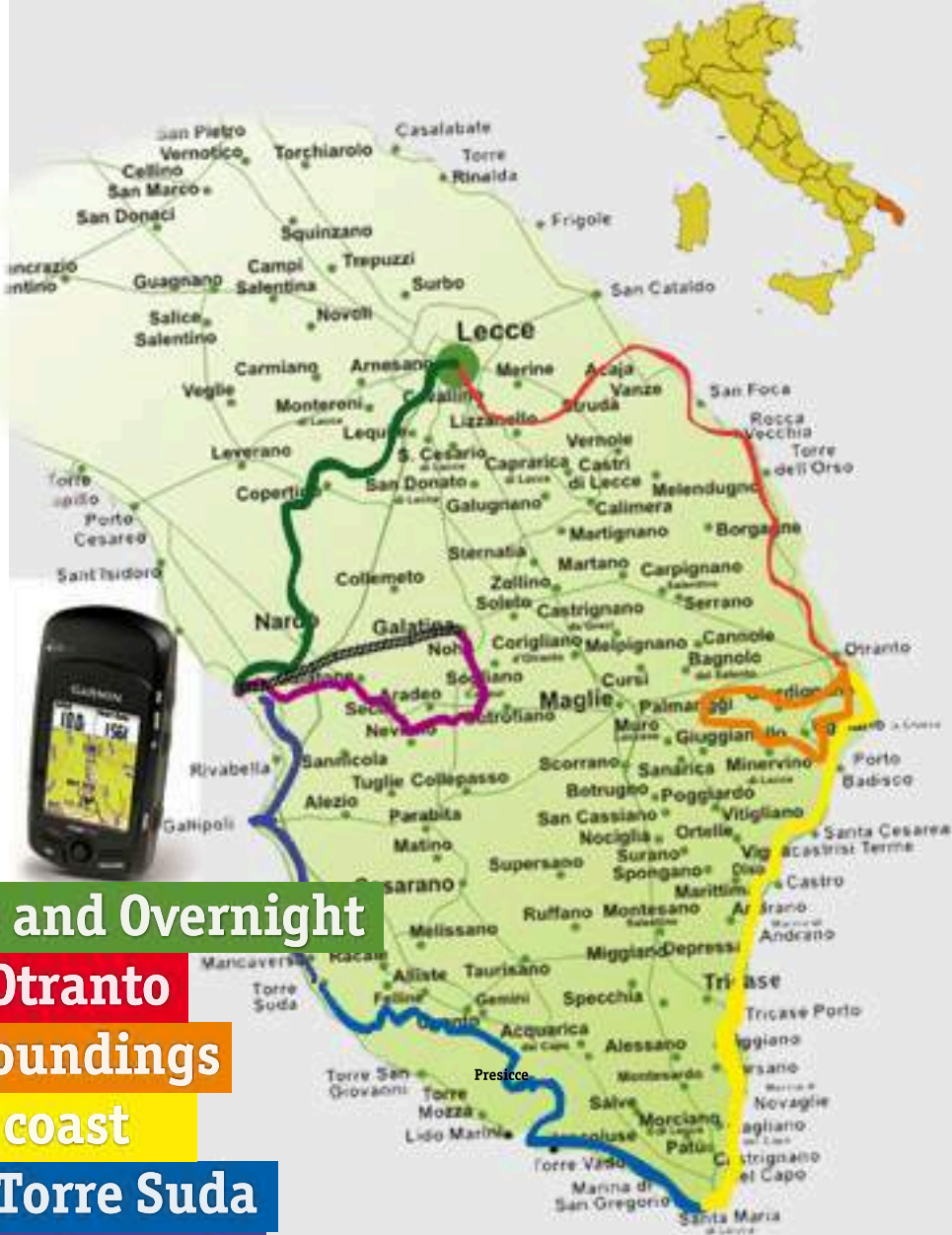
Itinerary

Salento is a region that is **almost completely flat**, making the ride a pleasant journey for **any level of rider**.

We will be cycling approximately 30 km a day (about 3 hours of **leisurely cycling**), mainly crossing **secondary roads**, with sea-breaks, guided visits and Italian lessons. "Salento bici tour" follows the philosophy of "slow-moving" to fully enjoy the surrounding landscape and culture with all its different aspects.

"Gps Maps will guide you through the most suggestive and less busy roads, as if some of our expert guides you by hands"

Your overnight stay will be in **prestigious properties** (resorts, villas and farmhouses) and dinners in the best restaurants to let you enjoy a comfortable and mouthwatering holiday.



Day 1: Arrive in Lecce and Overnight

Day 2: From Lecce to Otranto

Day 3: Otranto's surroundings

Day 4: Otranto-Leuca coast

Day 5: From Leuca to Torre Suda

Day 6: Gallipoli and Ionic coast

Day 7: Gallipoli's surroundings

Day 8: way back Lecce

Day 9: Onward travel

Day 1: **prologue**

Meeting in **Lecce**. Bicycle delivery, with GPS navigator. Briefing about the route.

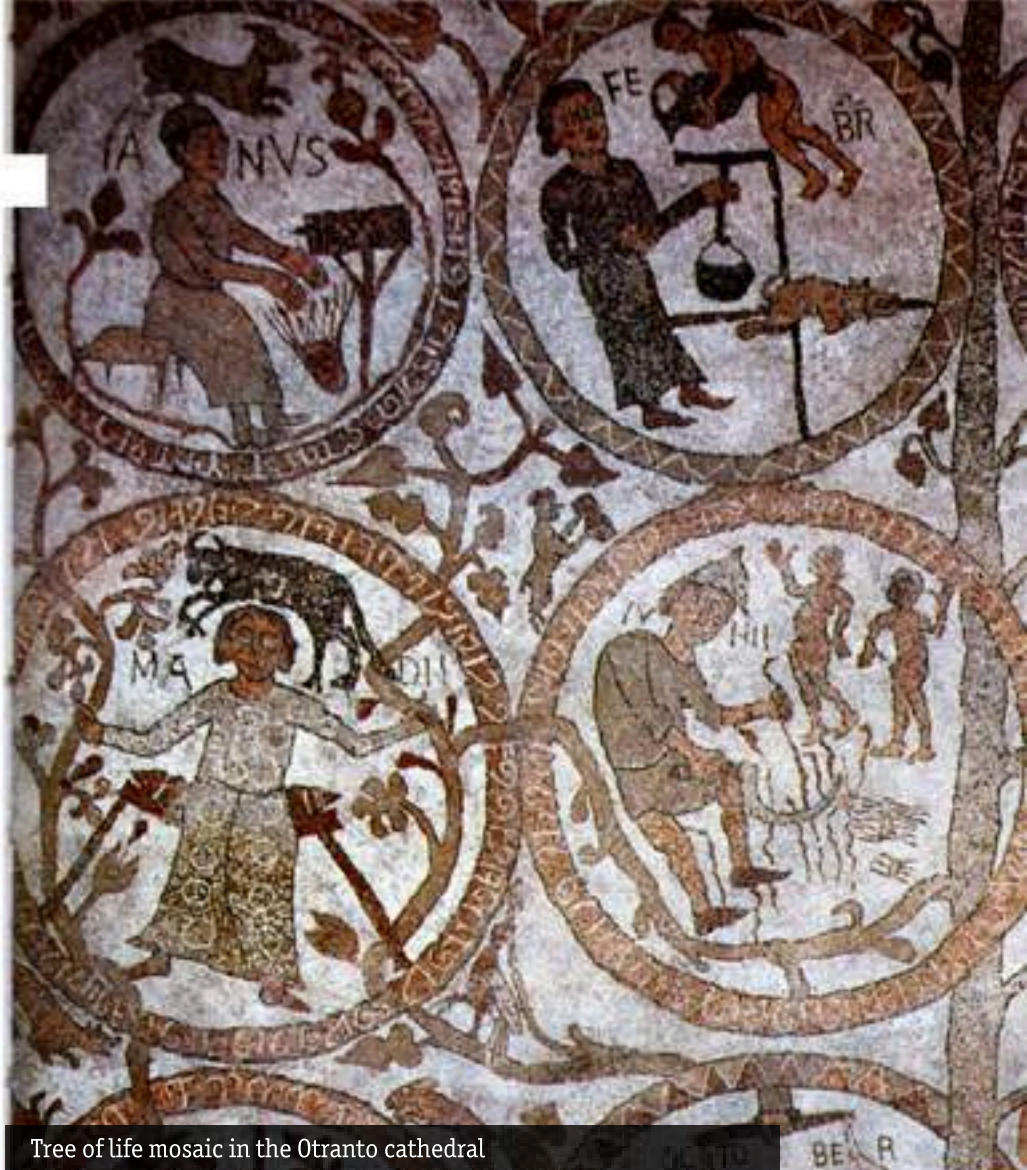
Day 2: from **Lecce** to **Otranto**

54m

0km

56km

Flat route today, with many interesting cultural and naturalistic sights. First we visit Acaya – a **fortified city** with a huge castle -and then we plunge down to “Le Cesine” – a **WWF protected area**, crossing point for many species of migratory birds. From there we head towards the coast, along the ruins of Roca Vecchia – an ancient **Bronze age city** – and ‘Alimini’ Lakes. Some more kilometers and we are in Otranto, where narrow streets reveal wonders at every corner: the **St Peter church** Byzantine frescoes, a walk along the ramparts overlooking the sea and finally **the cathedral** with its **paved mosaic**, a sort of figurative **Middle Age encyclopedia**.



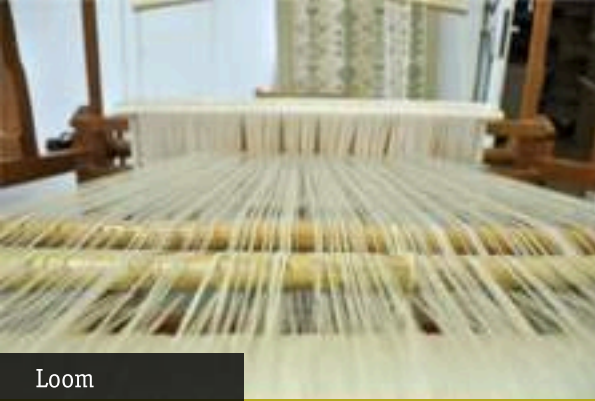
Tree of life mosaic in the Otranto cathedral



Acaya castle



In “Roca Vecchia”



Loom



Negramaro wine and fresh cheese

Day 3: Otranto's surroundings



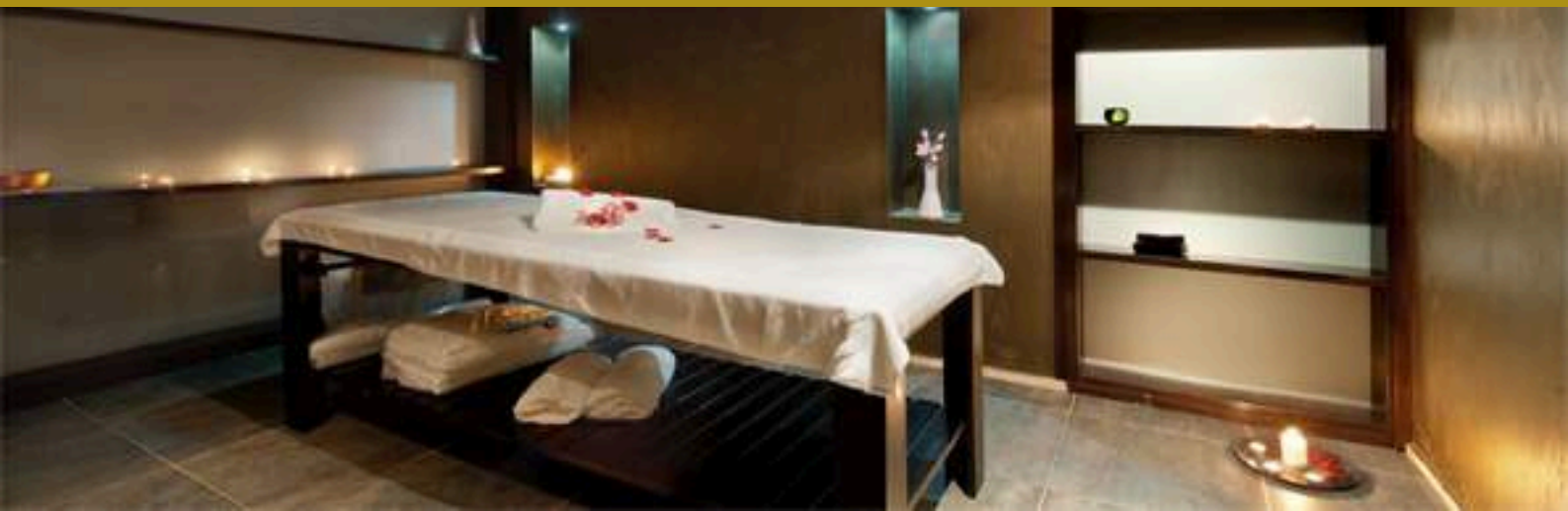
Exploring Otranto's surroundings day. Riding along the little river "Idro" ("water"), which gave the name to the city, we arrive in Casamassella, where old **looms** are still being used in "le Costantine" foundation. After a guided tour we move toward Giurdignano, crossing a **Bronze age megalithic park** containing huge stones ("dolmen" and "menhir"), and we arrive to "La Cutura" **botanic garden**. Here "Toto" will lead us through his incredible **plants collection** (unique in Europe for its cactus species) and will offer us some lunch. In the afternoon visit to a characteristic **stone-made oven** and then we'll Enjoy a **wine and cheese tasting** in a wine cellar. Return to Otranto and free dinner in the historical centre. Optional horse riding in the morning or in the afternoon.



Horse riding



*"I **Basiliani** are a lovely **Resort Spa** in the town of Otranto. The hotel features a wellness centre with swimming pools, sauna and massage rooms ... for a perfect relax after the first day of cycling! "*



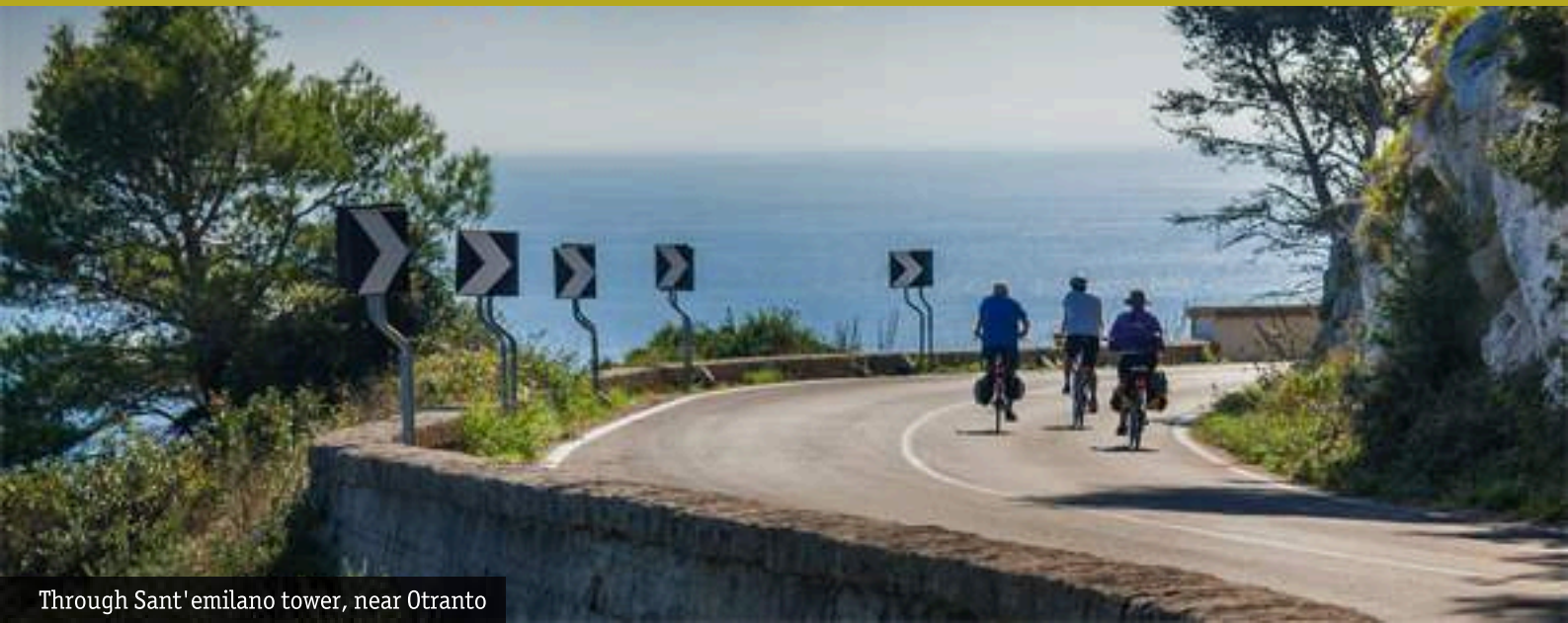
Day 4: Otranto – Leuca coast



Today you cycle along the wildest Salento coastal stretch: the 'Palacia' lighthouse (far east point of Italy) and a little red lake surfaced in a disused bauxite quarry are between the most interesting spots. Nestled among the cliffs above the sea, this road is a huge balcony that looks onto Otranto Strait. With a little bit of luck we will be able to see the mountains of Albania and Greece. You could visit 'Zinzulusa' cave, going down nearly 200 feet into the earth bowels. On the way you can admire some terraces and dry walls, the ingenious devices of peasants to get arable land in barren and impervious areas. After crossing the bridge over the "ciolo" (a small and rich in rare flora canyon carved by the waters,) you reach Santa Maria di Leuca where you visit the sanctuary, following the ancient pilgrims footsteps. Dinner based on seafood in the best restaurant of the town.



Acquaviva bay, near Castro



Through Sant'emiliano tower, near Otranto



*"La Meridiana is a splendid nineteenth century villa located on the seafront of **Leuca**. It has 5 rooms facing an impressive circular hall, where dinner will be served."*



Day 5: From **Leuca** to **Torre Suda**



Today we discover Leuca Cape, the southern part of Apulia. After an astonishing **defense tower** - situated in the centre of a small village - it is time to visit an **ancient mill**, dug into the rock, and then an **enigmatic funerary monument** made by big stones (its name "centopietre", means "hundred stones"), coming from Vereto, an ancient **pre-roman town** situated nearby. Finally we visit Leuca piccola ('little Leuca'), an important **pilgrimage station** which still maintains a vast underground area.

Through olive groves and dry stone walls we'll reach Sarruni farmhouse, for a **tasting of organic products**. Afterwards, you'll move on to Ugento to visit its archaeological museum and spend the night in a beautiful 'Masseria' (farmhouse) overlooking the sea. - with dinner served in masseria.



Pasta and sauce with basil



Salignano's tower



"The Maldives of Salento"



*"A restored farmhouse to
admire the sunsets over the
Ionian Sea before a meal or a
drink prepared by chef Mauro"*



Day 6:

Gallipoli and Ionic coast



In the morning we'll head towards the coast for a dip in the sea of the St. Andrew's island and Punta Pizzo" natural park. Then, we'll move on to **Gallipoli** where you'll enjoy a rich aperitif. located on an island, this small fisherman village is striking by its light, its alleys and its fish market. After a delicious ice cream, we ride again toward the **San Mauro church**: one of the hidden treasure of this country, hosting an ancient Byzantine frescoes cycle. Enjoying the sunset we cycle to Santa Caterina, Quiet village on the borders of Porto Selvaggio Natural Park. In the afternoon optional kayaking in the **Park of Porto Selvaggio**.

Dinner served in Villa or in a nearby restaurant (depending on the size of the group).



San Mauro's church

Day 7: Gallipoli's surroundings

31m
0km 60km

Porto Selvaggio

Day dedicated to Gallipoli's surroundings. First stop is in Sannicola to discover its underground oil mill, then Tuglie with its amazing "rural culture museum". We'll go to Galatone to visit its beautiful Baroque old town and the Norman castle of Fulcignano. In the afternoon we reach Galatina where we can admire the church of Santa Caterina, totally painted with frescoes in Giottesco style, and then visit the beautiful historical center of the town. Later stop in the vinery "Santi Dimitri", to know closer the process of obtaining oil and wine, and for a wine-cheese tasting.



Santa Caterina's church.



*"A charming villa in the pine forest, right in front of the sea. On the borders of **Porto Selvaggio** natural park, the "last but not least" of your wonderful trip."*



Day 8: way back to **Lecce**

65m

0km

42km

Last day of our trip. Ww'll pass by many 19th century **fortified farmhouse** and villas on our way back to Lecce. We stop in Nardò to visit its decadent **baroque style** historical center. Next stop in Copertino to discover its impressive Norman castle and listen to stories about Saint Joseph of Copertino, '**the Saint of holy of flights**'. Some km before Lecce a last stop at a handcraft **traditional pottery**, at the Martina brothers, skillful keepers of this ancient art. Late afternoon arrival in Lecce and bikes drop off. Final dinner in one of the best restaurant of the town!

Day 9: **Onward travel**




Potter master



Between Nardò and Copertino




Olive oil, tomato and mozzarella

A long wooden dining table is set outdoors on a grassy lawn. The table is covered with a white tablecloth and is laden with various dishes, including bread, cheese, and wine. Several wooden chairs are arranged around the table. In the background, there are trees and a clear sky.

9 days and 8 nights food and wine tour

The tour includes:

- 8 overnights stays in villas, resorts, farmhouse or B&B
- 8 breakfast
- 5 dinners, drinks included.
- 5 tastings with wine, cheese and local products
- Baggage transportation
- GPS guide with tracks included
- Road book with cultural information and tips about the route.
- Assistance h24 based on local company with english speaker.

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- A dining table is set indoors with a white tablecloth. The table is covered with various dishes, including bread, cheese, and wine. Several wooden chairs are arranged around the table. In the background, there are trees and a clear sky.
- Net Cost for person (based on 2 person): 1.100€
 - Optional bike rental: 80€ / 120€
 - Optional e-bike rental: 130€ / 170€
 - Single supplement: 200€
 - Solo traveler supplement: 100€
 - Extra nights in Lecce or Bari: 70€

* Accommodations could change from indicated according to availability. Anyhow we guarantee same level accommodation.

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